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FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
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INFO RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 6588
RUEH DU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 3370

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAPE TOWN 000037

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/21/2020

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [SF](#) [PGOV](#)

SUBJECT: WILL MOTUMI BE MADE PERMANENT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE?

Classified By: Consul General Alberta Mayberry for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) Summary . On February 9, Defense Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, briefed Parliament,s Portfolio Committee on Defense and Veterans Affairs (Defense Committee) in response to the poor performance of SA Acting Permanent Secretary (PermSec) in the Ministry of Defense, Tsepe Motumi, the week before during a meeting of the Standing Committee of Public Accounts (SCOPA), where Motumi was unable to answer MPs questions on steps being taken to address shortcomings in the department,s finances. Sisulu staunchly defended Motumi and intimated that President Zuma would confirm Motumi as the MoD PermSec by March. End summary.

¶2. (U) On February 9, Defense Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, briefed Parliament,s Portfolio Committee on Defense and Veterans Affairs in response to the poor performance of the Acting Permanent Secretary , Tsepe Motumi, last week during a Public Accounts committee meeting, where Motumi was unable to answer MPs questions on steps being taken to address shortcomings in the Department,s financial record keeping. Sisulu staunchly defended Motumi and intimated that President Zuma would confirm Motumi as the PermSec by March. Sisulu also noted she would recommend Motumi for any job and said that Motumi has a lot of experience in defense policy even though that did not come across in the Public Accounts meeting. Sisulu was surprised at Motumi,s poor performance due to the fact that she and members of the Department of Defense had briefed Motumi and helped him prepare for the meeting. Sisulu noted she was in attendance at the Defense Committee meeting at her own request since she is responsible for the Department of Defense in her current position as Minister. She stressed several times that during her tenure, the Department would not have another qualified audit (an audit report in which a further qualification of the financial statements is required because the Auditor feels there is a limitation on the scope of the audit) by the Auditor General. Sisulu also said several times her Department is addressing the six problems that were addressed in the audit; management of assets; disclosure of lease commitments, irregular expenditure; lack of verification of payments; accruals; and departmental revenue.

¶3. (U) Sisulu blamed many of her Department,s problems on the abrupt departure of former Defense Minister Lekota and Deputy Defense Minister George when they left the ANC to join the Congress of the People (COPE) as well as the death in a car accident of former PermSec Masilela. She also used every opportunity she could to blame the opposition, and in particular Democratic Alliance (DA) Shadow Minister David Maynier, for tripping up Motumi in the Public Accounts committee meeting and for blowing up the issues in the press.

Sisulu also noted there is now a perception, perhaps fueled by the DA that the military is not ready to defend the country and that the defense force is not prepared. Sisulu asked Maynier to inform the DoD clearly as to the mandates of the respective Parliamentary committees, in particular, that of the Joint Standing Committee on Defense because she believes the committee sometime exceeds its mandate. Comment. Maynier recently told Econoff that the flip side is

true--the Minister has never made clear to the Committee what the point of the military is or what its goals are. End comment.

¶4. (C) Following the committee meeting, Political Counselor and CT Political Officer met with Maynier. Maynier is Qand CT Political Officer met with Maynier. Maynier is disheartened that it looks like Motumi will be made permanent PermSec saying that Motumi is not the right man for the job.

(Note. In a subsequent meeting with Ambassador and Poloffs on February 18, Booi said he does not think Motumi will remain in his current position, but did not elaborate on his belief. Additionally, DAO is also not convinced that Motumi will be made PermSec due to the fact that he is under investigation for fiscal irregularities. End note.) Maynier thinks that Sisulu is softening towards him, although to Poloffs it looked like Sisulu was very harsh and attacked Maynier at every opportunity throughout the meeting. While Poloffs were meeting with Maynier, Defense Committee Chair, Nyamni Booi, called Maynier to get his readout of the meeting. It was a very cordial conversation and Poloff, who is close to both Booi and Maynier, notes that Booi and Maynier have a very good relationship even though they are in opposing parties. Booi will often allow Maynier to do the ANC's dirty work, such as when Maynier wanted to go after Sipho Thomo, the recently fired CEO of Armscor. Thomo, who is currently appealing his dismissal, was fired after a disciplinary hearing that looked into allegations relating to his leadership and management of Armscor, which came to a head when he disclosed to Parliament late last year that the cost of South Africa's contract to buy eight Airbus A400M heavy-lift planes had more than doubled. Maynier expected Booi to oppose his request to have Thomo appear before the Defense Committee, but Booi gave Maynier free

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